Every 'destined' matter has a 'set' time to transpire. And you will soon come to know. (Al-Qur'an)

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PM Imran Khan said that they will give huge surprise on Sunday.

## Will give huge surprise on Sunday, says PM Imran

**ISLAMABAD:** Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Friday that they will give huge surprise on Sunday on the day of voting for no-confidence motion submitted by the joint opposition. He said this in his meeting with senior journalists. During the meeting, the prime minister said that removing Sardar Usman Buzdar from his post was a political ploy, adding that the opposition would be greatly surprised on the issue of counting on Sunday. He said that the legal process is being used, adding that he will fight till the last ball. Outside world needs slaves, says Imran Khan In an interview to a private TV channel on Friday, he said that the history of the subcontinent is that it has always been controlled from outside, while Mir Jaffer and Mir Sadiq work from are inside. He said Mohammad Mosaddegh introduced an independent foreign policy in Iran and he was removed through coup, adding that the outside world needs slaves who bring domestic policy for personal interests. Imran Khan said he had an idea of conspiracy from August, adding that he knew the planning when people used to go to London. Former PM and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif met Hussain Haqqani in London on March 3. He went on to say that Hussain Haqqani was also against the Pakistani army but if we do not have a strong army, the enemy will divide our country into 3 parts. "Iraq, Syria, Libya have been weakened due to lack of strong army and Pakistan needs a strong army," he said adding that nothing should be done to harm the strong army. Asif Zardari, Nawaz Sharif harmed the country the most, PM Khan said and added Maryam Nawaz openly criticized the army. I will never speak against the army.

China expects Pakistan's political parties to uphold country's interests. BEIJING: The Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Thursday that the Chinese government expected that all the political parties in Pakistan would stay united and uphold the supreme interest of the country's development and stability. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said: "China is committed to non-interference policy, adding that as an all weather strategic cooperative partner and friendly neighbour of Pakistan, it is our sincere hope that all parties in Pakistan will stay united and uphold the major interest of country's developments and stability." Chinese foreign ministry says the country is committed to non-interference policy.

## Shahbaz became self-appointed PM while sitting at home: Fawad

**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Friday said that PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif has become a "self-appointed prime minister while sitting at home." Addressing a press conference, flanked by Energy Minister Hammad Azhar and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Communication Dr Shahbaz Gill, Fawad vowed that the "dream of the Opposition to oust the premier will be shattered" on Sunday when the members of the Parliament will gather in the house to vote for the no-confidence motion against the prime minister. "Each minute of the next 48 hours is very important," he said. Taking a jibe at the confidence of the Opposition leaders, Fawad said that while Shahbaz is dreaming of becoming the prime minister of the country, his son [Hamza Shahbaz] is eyeing the seat of chief minister in Punjab. Fawad further added that the government is planning to file a petition to cancel the bail orders of both Shahbaz and Hamza. Talking about the "foreign conspiracy" under debate after PM Imran Khan claimed that the country has received a "threat letter", the information minister said the leaders of the Opposition are part of the conspiracy. Fawad says "each minute of next 48 hours is very important."

## Shahbaz Sharif berates PM Imran Khan, says 'defeat' imminent Sunday

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and PML-N President Shabaz Sharif censured Prime Minister Imran Khan, saying his "defeat was imminent" on Sunday when the lower house is scheduled to vote on the no-confidence motion against the premier. In a press conference, the Opposition leader said the only cure for an "arrogant and stubborn" man's illness is to oust his government through the legal process a no-confidence motion. Shahbaz, responding to the prime minister's allegations of a "foreign power" threatening to oust his government, said: "I do not speak on assumptions. I speak on solid evidence." Talking about PM Imran Khan's address to the nation held a day earlier where he lashed out at the Opposition for "conspiring with foreign powers", Shahbaz said he does not listen to the premier's speeches as he had made "abusive language" the order of the day. But Shahbaz noted that since he is the Opposition leader, he receives information from several sources about what an important personality has said. "Have you no shame?" Shahbaz said in response to the prime minister's almost 45-minute long speech. The Opposition leader said during the PML-N's government, Nawaz Sharif condemned drone attacks on every forum. "His narrative of accountability has been shattered," Shahbaz says.

## Enforced disappearance is treason: Justice Minallah

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Athar Minallah equated enforced disappearances with treason on Friday. The remark came during the hearing of missing journalist Mudassar Naro's case at the IHC. Naro, a journalist from Lahore, went missing in August 2018. At the outset of the hearing, the additional attorney-general and judicial assistant appeared before the court. "Enforced disappearances are treason. It is a case of treason," Justice Minallah remarked. He said that enforced disappearances are not acceptable in a country that follows the Constitution. Says "no one can go missing without federal and provincial governments' will."

## Ramadan moon: Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee to meet tomorrow

PESHAWAR: The Central Reut-e-Hilal Committee meeting to sight the Ramadan moon will be held tomorrow (Saturday). The committee's meeting will be held in Peshawar under the chairmanship of Chairman Central Ruet-i-Hilal Committee Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad. Azad said that the meeting will be attended by Peshawar's zonal committee members and officials of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Science and Technology, Met Department and SUPARCO. Meanwhile, the other zonal committees will also meet in respective cities including Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Islamabad, he added. Chairman Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad to head meeting in Peshawar.

## No-trust motion: Jam Abdul Karim reaches Sindh House in the Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Jam Abdul Karim has reached Sindh House located in Islamabad to vote against the Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan in tha no-confidence motion, reported on Friday. According to details, the PPP Member of National Assembly (MNA) was shifted to the Sindh House amid strict security arrangements. It merits mention here that MNA Jam Abdul Karim was accused in the Nazim Jokhio murder case. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Jam Abdul Karim has reached Sindh House located in Islamabad to vote against the Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan in tha no-confidence motion, reported on Friday. According to details, the PPP Member of National Assembly (MNA) was shifted to the Sindh House amid strict security arrangements. It merits mention here that MNA Jam Abdul Karim was accused in the Nazim Jokhio murder case. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Jam Abdul Karim has reached Sindh House located in Islamabad to vote against the Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan in tha no-confidence motion, reported on Friday. According to details, the PPP Member of National Assembly (MNA) was shifted to the Sindh House amid strict security arrangements. It merits mention here that MNA Jam Abdul Karim was accused in the Nazim Jokhio murder case.

## Punjab education boards revise grade improvement policy

LAHORE: The Punjab Boards Committee of Chairmen (PBCC) held a meeting on March 11, during which the committee made minor policy changes that would benefit students if they need to improve their marks by retaking an exam. According to a notification issued by the PBCC, students are given four examination opportunities to improve their marks/grades by reappearing in the current syllabi within the duration of three years. The students studying in classes ninth to 12 can take advantage of the policy. A PBCC meeting was held today which approved the schedule to accept the application forms of SSC/HSSC of the candidates "who intend to avail improvement chance". The schedule for receipt of the admission form within a single fee starts from April 1 to 15 for the year 2022, said the notification. According to the notification, forms after April 15 will be accepted as per the prevailing schedule/rules of the boards. Following are the changes made: 1. For the purpose of improvement of grade/marks, a candidate will be provided with four examination opportunities in current/prevalent syllabi within a period of three years after having passed the SSC or HSSC Examination, in the same subjects/group in which he/she previously passed the examination subject to the condition that he/she has not attained the higher qualification during this period. However, it will be the choice of a candidate whether he/she appears for improvement of marks in any subject/subjects or part I or II or as a whole with the condition that the candidate can avail these four chances mentioned above till the improvement of the actual result within three years. Once the result of the candidate is improved, he/she will not be allowed to appear again. 2. Next higher qualification means the completion of HSSC or equivalent for candidates appearing to improve SSC results and it is a competition of Associate Degree in Arts (ADA)/Associate Degree in Sciences (ADS)/ Bachelor of Studies (BS) or equivalent for the candidates appearing to improve HSSC results. 3. The candidates appearing to improve their overall Grade "E" or "D" are allowed to avail four chances within three years till the achievement of an overall Grade "C" (50% marks). 4. The candidates appearing for improvement after a gap of two years from the year of the passing of SSC/HSSC will have to provide an affidavit that he/she has not attained the higher qualification. 5. The Result Sheet and Certificate issued by the Board must reflect the number of attempts a candidate has availed. 6. Other rules of improvement currently in vogue in all Boards of the Punjab will remain the same. 7. The candidates having overall 'E' or 'D' grades may avail their chances accordingly.

# Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves fall to lowest level since Oct 2020

KARACHI: The foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) declined 19.48% on a weekly basis, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Thursday. On March 25, the foreign currency reserves held by the SBP were recorded at $12,047.3 million, down $2,915 million compared with $14,962.4 million on March 18. According to the central bank, this decline reflects repayment of external debt, including repayment of a major syndicated loan facility from China. "The rollover of this syndicated facility is being processed and is expected shortly," the central bank said. Overall liquid foreign currency reserves held by the country, including net reserves held by banks other than the SBP, stood at $18,554.5 million. Net reserves held by banks amounted to $6,507.2 million. According to Arif Habib Limited, total reserves dropped to its lowest level since June 26, 2020; while SBP reserves dropped to its lowest level since October 9, 2020. Earlier today, Pakistani rupee also fell below Rs183-mark for the first time in the history of Pakistan, closing the day at Rs183.48 against the US dollar in the interbank market. Foreign exchange reserves held by the SBP declined by 19.48% on a weekly basis.

# The illegal housing societies in Pakistan

Huge amounts of money have also been invested by aspiring middle-class families in purchasing plots of land, booking apartments and renting dwellings. Due to the absence of a weak and fragmented regulatory framework and prevailing corrupt practices in land allocation, utilization, conversion and registration, a large number of irregular and illegal housing cooperative societies have sprung up throughout the country taking over fertile agricultural land and also sucking in billions of savings of middle-class aspirants for getting decent housing. Many of these societies have left incomplete structures and buildings not fit for occupation while legal proceedings are held up and not concluded for years altogether because of adjournments and stay orders or the absence of lawyers on the dates of hearings. While the main responsibility lies with the executive branch for allowing a laissez-faire environment without a single regulatory agency overseeing the real-estate sector, the judiciary at the lower level hasn't helped much. Housing is both a social as well as an economic asset. Deciding these cases expeditiously would help these middle classes acquire assets that can be used as collateral for other economic purposes. The country would witness a quantum jump in liquidity and augmentation of savings in the financial system as the disenfranchised poor and the lower middle classes become part of the formal sector.

# High energy costs are hitting UK. It's about to get worse

LONDON: Tia Rutherford is worried about her 3-year-old son. As energy prices soared last fall, she tacked fleece blankets over her doors and windows to keep the cold out and started serving Jacob breakfast in his room so she didn't have to heat the living room. But she's consumed by worry that she can't pay her utility bills and that her son isn't warm enough. "There are effects on his health," said Rutherford, a 29-year-old single mother who lives in southeast London. "He's constantly catching colds." People across the United Kingdom will face similar choices in coming months with energy costs for millions of households set to rise by 54% on Friday. It is the second big jump in energy bills since October, and a third may be ahead as rebounding demand from the COVID-19 pandemic and now Russia's war in Ukraine push prices for oil and natural gas higher. Energy costs are the main driver of rising consumer prices. While inflation is a worldwide phenomenon, it's a bigger issue in Britain because it's more exposed to rising natural gas prices than even its gas-reliant European neighbors, where utility bills and other costs also have soared. Prices for natural gas, which is used for electricity and heating, have more than doubled in the past year. In the U.K., economists warn of the biggest drop in living standards since the mid-1950s, fueled by rocketing energy costs, food prices and preplanned tax increases. High energy costs are hitting UK. It's about to get worse.

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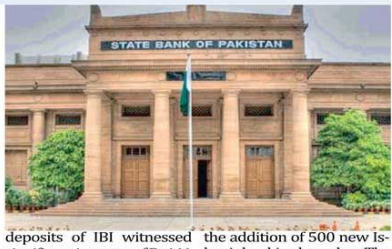
# Islamic banking assets recorded highest ever growth of Rs1.3 trillion in CY21: SBP

ISLAMABAD: The Islamic Banking Industry (IBI) has reached new peaks during CY21 as its assets surpassed the 5 trillion mark to reach Rs5,577 billion with the highest ever increase of Rs1,308 billion, whereas deposits reached at Rs4,211 billion with an increase of Rs822 billion. According to details, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported this today (Friday) in its Islamic Banking Bulletin for the quarter ending December 2021. According to SBP report, assets of IBI grew by 30.6 percent in CY21, while deposits increased by 24.2 percent during the same period. As a result of this strong growth, the market share of Islamic banking assets and deposits in the overall banking industry increased to 18.6 percent and 19.4 percent, respectively, by end Dec 2021. The increase in assets of IBI was driven by both financing to the private and public sector and investments in Shariah compliant securities. Financing by the IBI recorded a rise of Rs716 billion (38.1 percent) during CY21, which is also the highest ever increase during a year. Further, investments of IBI witnessed a growth of Rs591 billion (46.9 percent) during CY21 on the back of domestic sovereign Sukuk issued by the Government of Pakistan. On funding side, current deposits and saving




deposits of IBI witnessed significant increase of Rs441 billion and Rs277 billion respectively during CY21. The growth in deposits are also owed to the fact that, during CY21, the availability of Islamic banking services increased in the country with the addition of 500 new Islamic banking branches. The total number of branches now stand at 3,956 across 125 districts, which is around 25 percent of the total number of commercial banks' branches in the country.

# SBP foreign exchange reserves stands at the $18.55405 bn

KARACHI: Total liquid foreign reserves of the country figured $18.55405 billion, says State Bank of Pakistan. SBP's weekly statement issued on Thursday said that on March 25, the foreign reserves holding of State Bank were $12,047.3 million. The net foreign reserves held by commercial banks amounted $6,507.2 million. During the week ending on March 25, SBP reserves decreased by $2,915 million to $12,047.3 million. This decline reflects repayment of external debt, including repayment of a major syndicated loan facility from China. The rollover of this syndicated facility is being processed and is expected shortly. SBP foreign exchange reserves stands at $18.55405 bn. Total liquid foreign reserves of the country figured $18.55405 billion, says State Bank of Pakistan. SBP's weekly statement issued on Thursday said that on March 25, the foreign reserves holding of State Bank were $12,047.3 million. The net foreign reserves held by commercial banks amounted $6,507.2 million.

# Govt decides to keep prices of petroleum products unchanged

ISLAMABAD: The government of Pakistan on Thursday has decided to maintain the prices of petroleum products. According to the notification issued by the Ministry of Finance regarding the prices of petroleum products, the price of petrol has been fixed at Rs 149.86 per liter and the price of high speed diesel at Rs 144.15 per liter. As per the notification, the price of kerosene will be maintained at Rs 125.56 per liter and the new price of light diesel at Rs 118.31 per liter. The prices will be applicable from April 1 to 15. According to the Finance Ministry, the government will bear the burden of Rs 33 billion by maintaining prices. In the light of Prime Minister Imran Khan s February 28 decision, prices have been unchanged. The government of Pakistan on Thursday has decided to maintain the prices of petroleum products. According to the notification issued by the Ministry of Finance regarding the prices of petroleum products, the price of petrol has been fixed at Rs 149.86 per liter and the price of high speed diesel at Rs 144.15 per liter. As per the notification, the price of kerosene will be maintained at Rs 125.56 per liter and the new price of light diesel at Rs 118.31 per liter. The prices will be applicable from April 1 to 15. According to the Finance Ministry, the government will bear the burden of Rs 33 billion by maintaining prices. In the light of Prime Minister Imran Khan s February 28 decision, prices have been unchanged.

# Much to common man's pain, inflation jumps to 12.7% in March

ISLAMABAD: The inflation rate picked up pace and jumped to 12.7% in March amid a significant rise in prices of perishable food items both in urban and rural areas. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose to 12.7% in March over the same month a year ago. The national data collecting agency reported a 33.63% increase in prices of chicken, 15.17% in fruits and an 8.32% surge in prices of mustard oil, hitting every household adversely. Similarly, the PBS reported a 7.79% increase in liquefied hydrocarbons and a 2% increase in construction input items in March over the same month of the last year. The majority of the prices increased due to an increase in commodity prices in the international market and a decline in the value of the rupee. The surge also comes amid a sharp rise in global inflation and soaring oil prices in the international market, which touched $140 per barrel during the month, and its direct and indirect impact is passed on to the consumers. The increase in commodity prices in the international market and reduction in the value of the Pakistani rupee will push the cost of every imported commodity including wheat, sugar, cooking oil, crude oil and the raw materials of the industries. An analyst from AHL Sana Tawfiq said that the inflation rate was slightly above the market expectation; however, the analysts expected the number to remain in double-digits. "The headline inflation increased due to month-on-month increase in all indices, except for housing index," she said, adding that the increase in core inflation is "alarming". On a month-on-month basis, inflation dropped to 0.8% owing to a decrease in housing index. The Wholesale Price Index (WPI), which captures prices in the wholesale market, also rose to 23.8% in March over the same month a year ago. Usually, the retail market prices reach the wholesale price levels in four to six months, indicating that the prices will remain high in the near term. The PBS reported that the overall inflation rate picked up pace both in the urban and rural areas. The inflation rate in urban areas rose to 11.9% in March and in rural areas rose to 13.9% over the same month of the last year. The food inflation rate in cities stood at 14.5% and in villages and towns at 15.5%, which was relatively higher than the previous month. Non-food inflation was recorded at 10.4% in urban areas and at 12.5% in rural areas. Core inflation — calculated by excluding food and energy items — accelerated to 8.9% in urban areas in March, reported the national data collecting agency.On a month-on-month basis, inflation drops to 0.8%.

# Gold price gains Rs100 per tola in Pakistan

KARACHI: Gold price in Pakistan gains Rs100 per tola and Rs 86 per 10-grams on Friday contrary to a decline in the international bullion prices. The precious metal closed at Rs131,450 per tola and Rs112,697 per 10-grams compared to Rs131,350 and Rs112,611 a day earlier. Gold shined during the month of March recording a gain of Rs2,750 (or 2.13%) per tola in the period while it gained Rs5,350 (or 4.24%) during the quarter ended March 31. The price of gold is increasing as it is considered one of the safest investments, hence, its price is skyrocketing as an investment is pouring in at a rapid pace. As the dollar continues to strengthen day after day, investors' confidence in the currency has tumbled and they have diverted their investment to gold. Local dealers had also said that the return of inflationary days in Pakistan and around the world has once again invited investors' attention towards the yellow metal as at such a time, safer commodities become attractive. In the international market, bullion prices slightly dropped by $4 per ounce to settle at $1,927.

## Giga-casting and robots: How Volkswagen's Trinity aims to catch up with Tesla

BERLIN: As Tesla Inc. begins production at its German plant this month, rival Volkswagen Group is weeks away from finalizing plans for a 2-billion-euro ($2.2 billion) electric-vehicle factory that it hopes will bring it up to speed with its U.S. rival. Tesla says it can already produce a Model Y crossover in 10 hours at its new factory in Gruenheide near Berlin, whereas it can take VW three times as long to make its ID3 full-electric hatchback. VW now aims to slash production times at its new Trinity plant by using techniques such as large die casting and cutting the number of components in its cars by several hundred. The factory should be up and running in VW's home city of Wolfsburg in 2026. It will build a full-electric sedan for the VW brand with advanced self-driving capabilties. "Our goal is clear: we want to set the standard with our production," VW brand production chief Christian Vollmer told Reuters in an interview. "If we can get to 10 hours, we have achieved something big." The automaker has been improving productivity at a rate of about 5 percent a year but must take bigger leaps to keep its upper hand in the European market, Vollmer said, without providing a new percentage target. VW -- with its stable of brands from Skoda, Seat and VW to Audi, Porsche and Bentley -- has a 25 percent share of the European EV market, ahead of Tesla on 13 percent. Giga-casting and robots: How Volkswagen's Trinity aims to catch up with Tesla.

## Facebook's Meta funded attack campaign against TikTok: report

NEW YORK: Facebook's owner Meta has hired a consulting firm to carry out a US campaign denigrating its fierce rival TikTok, according to a Washington Post report Wednesday partially confirmed by. The campaign reportedly includes placing letters in major US news outlets and promoting negative stories about TikTok, allegedly using the type of tough tactics familiar to Washington politics. Meta, which shed hundreds of billions in value earlier this year due to doubts about its future, is in a pitched fight against the video sharing platform popular with young social media fans. "We believe all platforms, including TikTok, should face a level of scrutiny consistent with their growing success," Meta told AFP in a one-line statement in response to the article. The consulting firm, Targeted Victory, confirmed having worked for Meta and did not deny having put forward negative information about TikTok. "We're proud of the work we've done to highlight the dangers of TikTok," the firm's CEO Zac Moffatt tweeted. Employees at Targeted Victory worked to undermine TikTok, which is owned by Chinese company ByteDance, by promoting an effort to have it portrayed as a danger to American children, the Post reported, citing the firm's internal emails. The Post quoted one message saying Targeted Victory needed to "get the message out that while Meta is the current punching bag, TikTok is the real threat especially as a foreign owned app that is #1 in sharing data that young teens are using." The campaign reportedly includes promoting negative stories about TikTok.

# Farewell in honor of SHOs attending promotion course

Mianwali (IPS), DPO Mianwali Ismail-ur-Rehman Kharak on Promotion Course A farewell party was organized in honor of SI Samiullah Khan. The party was attended by SP Investigation Mianwali Captain (retd) Qazi Ali Raza, ASP Musa Khel Khurram Mahesar, SDPO President Rana Asif Nadeem and all Heads of Branches DPO Office. DPO Mianwali expressed best wishes for the departing officers. DPO Mianwali expressed best wishes for the departing officers.

# Imran Khan has destroyed the country: Baloch

Mianwali (IPS), Jamaat-e-Islami is in favor of early elections instead of no-confidence. Democracy is at stake for power. Jamaat-e-Islami has presented a separate statement against the PDM and the government. Imran Khan has sunk the country`s fleet in three and a half years. These views were expressed by Deputy Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Liaquat Baloch while addressing various functions in Mianwali and Doaba. He said, good governance is not seen in any sector during Imran Khan`s rule. Every part of the country has been destroyed. Many failures on the foreign front are recorded in Khan`s account. People should support Jamaat-e-Islami because only Jamaat-e-Islami can fulfill the expectations of the people.

# Inter-house Sports and Athletics Competitions

Sialkot (IPS), In Government Allama Iqbal Degree College for Women, Sialkot hosted inter-house sports and athletics competitions were held on its annual Sports Day. Member Provincial Assembly Syeda Farah Azmi, Principal Government Allama Iqbal Degree College for Women Sialkot Zeba Zahoor, Principal Government Degree College Hajipura Rehana Kamran and other women from different walks of life participated in large numbers. The students competed in 100 meters of indoor, spoon race, sock race, tug-of-war, PT, cricket, volleyball and badminton. Guests distributed trophies, prizes and certificates to the winners of sports and athletics competitions.

# PM should stop playing Islam card: Qasim

Minchinabad (PANA), The glorious celebrations of Urs Mubarak Hazrat Banwala Sharif have come to an end. MPA and Parliamentary Secretary Sindh Assembly Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan Allama Qasim Fakhri came specially and addressed. The Urs celebrations were held on Monday under the patronage of Syed Ahmad Shah, Patron of Tehreek-e-Labaik, District Bahawalnagar. Central, provincial and local leaders and workers of Tehreek-e-Labaik participated in the Urs. Qasim Fakhri paid homage to the people of the area for their commitment and love for the movement and conveyed the message of intensifying the work of the movement. He criticized the incumbent Prime Minister and asked him to stop playing Islam card in the name of Islamophobia Bill by not passing the resolution in his assembly.

# Sewerage system in the Ward No. 4 is inoperable

Minchinabad (PANA), The sewerage system in cLeod Ganj Ward No. 4 on the outskirts of Manchinabad has become completely inoperable. The street is starting to look like a pond. The life of the citizens has become unbearable due to the incompetence of the administration. Talking to the media, the citizens said that it has been more than a month since the sewerage was removed from the streets. There is neither a municipal committee nor a town committee in the area. Citizens have demanded from Assistant Commissioner Minchinabad to pay attention to this area.

# Police arrests one terrorist, recovers explosive in Karachi

KARACHI: Malir Police on Friday arrested one terrorist and recovered explosive material during an operation in Karachi. According to Malir Police spokesperson, terrorist Mir Sardar Khan belonged to a banned organization. Five packets of explosives, a batter, ball bearings and wire were recovered from the accused. Police said that the accused joined the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in 2003. The accused also confessed to attacking the NGO office in DI Khan in 2007. The accused along with his accomplices had attacked FC Fort Tank. In this regard, the police said that action would be taken on the identification of the arrested terrorist. According to Malir Police spokesperson, terrorist Mir Sardar Khan belonged to a banned organization.

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# Dutiful employees are real assets of department: Khalid

Sialkot (CPP), Chief Executive Officer Sialkot Waste Management Company Khalid Goraiya said that hard working and dutiful employees are the real assets of the department. Sanitary Supervisor Arshad Mahmood has successfully completed his 37-year career journey. He expressed these views while presenting a bouquet of flowers, shields and gifts on the retirement of Sanitary Supervisor Arshad Mahmood. Operations Manager Agha Dawood, Assistant Manager Admin Fahad Javed and other staff members were also present on the occasion.

# Open court by district administration

Hafizabad (CPP), On the direction of Punjab government, an open court was organized by the district administration in Hafizabad to solve the problems of the people in the district complex. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Asif Raza listened to the problems of applicants. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Imran Ismat, Assistant Commissioner Murad Hussain along with Land Record Center, Rural Centers Mall, Domicile Branch and other Revenue Officers were also present in the open court. The Deputy Commissioner said that on the instructions of Chief Secretary Tri Punjab Maran Ali Afzal and Senior Member Board of Revenue Babar Hayat Tarar, the purpose of holding Revenue Public Service Courts at district and tehsil level was to address the issues of the people under one roof on priority basis. These revenue public service courts deal with other revenue issues, including accuracy of land records, land individual, transfer and issuance of domicile, on a priority basis. The sailans who came to the open court presented their problems to the Deputy Commissioner for whom he issued orders for immediate solution.

# Police foils major drug smuggling attempt

Pindi Bhattian (CPP), According to details, Pindi Bhattian police under the leadership of DPO Hafiz Abad Bilal Zafar foiled a major drug smuggling attempt by taking action against drug smugglers. President Pindi Bhattian Police Station seized 125 kg of hashish and 14 kg of opium from a roadblock near Motorway Interchange Lahore side and arrested two inter-provincial drug smugglers. A case has been registered against the arrested drug smugglers including Ahmed Zeb and Shakeel Khan. Police seized a car used for drug trafficking. The arrested drug smugglers are residents of KPK province and used to carry out heinous drug smuggling activities in different districts of Punjab. Further investigation is underway.

# Swiss watchmakers grapple with fallout of Russian crisis

GENEVA: Swiss watchmakers are gathering in Geneva this week for their first big industry event in three years, tackling the impact of sanctions on rich Russians arising from the war in Ukraine. Russia was only the 17th largest market for Swiss watch exports last year, but how to manage business and client relations during such a sensitive time was high on the priority list, Reuters conversations with executives at Watches & Wonders showed. Sanctions against Russia and a ban on exports of luxury goods mean brands can no longer ship timepieces to Russia and all the big labels have closed directly operated stores. Neither Richemont nor Ulysse Nardin, recently sold to its management by Kering and traditionally strong in Russia, wanted to comment on reports Russian authorities had seized millions of dollars worth of watches at rival brand Audemars Piguet s Russian subsidiary and what that could mean for their own business there. Audemars Piguet did not return requests for comment. Ulysse Nardin s Patrick Pruniaux said the brand still had about 20 sales outlets, but was now much less dependent on Russia than in the past. Russians account for around 2% to 3% of global luxury spending, or around 7 billion euros ($7.75 billion), dwarfed by the U.S. and China, according to Claudia D Arpizio, senior partner and head of fashion and luxury at consultancy Bain. "These are loyal customers that buy every year and that I think have strong relationships with some of these brands on a personal level," she noted. Russian retailers were unable to attend the trade show, according to Thierry Stern, the head of independently owned Patek Philippe, which works with big Russian luxury retailer Mercury Group. DIAMONDS AND DUBAI: Stern said he did not expect the sanctions to hit the brand s access to diamonds because it had stock for at least a year and there was sufficient supply elsewhere. "If this lasts long, maybe prices will rise a bit," he said. Richemont said it had stopped buying Russian diamonds, but was confident it could source them elsewhere. Oris, another independently owned brand, said it put plans to expand in Russia with a new retail partner on hold.

# International

## Russians leave Chernobyl with Ukrainian troops as hostages: Kyiv

KYIV: Russian troops on Tuesday vacated Ukraine s Chernobyl nuclear power plant after weeks of occupation, but took an unspecified number of captive Ukrainian servicemen with them, officials in Kyiv said on Thursday. "As they ran away from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the Russian occupiers took members of the National Guard, whom they had held hostage since Feb 24, with them," the state nuclear agency Energoatom said in a statement on Telegram, citing plant workers. It was unclear how many Ukrainian servicemen had been taken away. Earlier in the day, a government body in charge of the Chernobyl exclusion zone said all Russian troops had left. "There are no longer any outsiders on the territory of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant," the agency said on Facebook.

## As Russia sees tech brain drain, other nations hope to gain

VILNIUS: Russia's tech workers are looking for safer and more secure professional pastures. By one estimate, up to 70,000 computer specialists, spooked by a sudden frost in the business and political climate, have bolted the country since Russia invaded Ukraine five weeks ago. Many more are expected to follow. For some countries, Russia's loss is being seen as their potential gain and an opportunity to bring fresh expertise to their own high-tech industries. Russian President Vladimir Putin has noticed the brain drain even in the throes of a war that, according to the U.N. refugee agency, has caused more than 4 million people to flee Ukraine and displaced millions more within the country. This week, Putin reacted to the exodus of tech professionals by approving legislation to eliminate income taxes between now and 2024 for individuals who work for information technology companies. As Russia sees tech brain drain, other nations hope to gain.

## Russia praises India's neutral stand on Ukraine fighting

NEW DELHI: Russia's foreign minister lauded India for not judging in a "one-sided way" as he discussed Moscow's military involvement in Ukraine with his Indian counterpart on Friday, after Washington urged New Delhi to use its leverage with Russia to end the war Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said ties between the two countries have sustained them through difficult times in the past. Jaishankar emphasized the importance of a cessation of violence but avoided condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Differences and disputes should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy and by respect for international law, the U.N. Charter, sovereignty and territorial integrity of states," he said. Lavrov praised India for judging "the situation in its entirety, not just in a one-sided way." He expressed hope that mutual respect in search of a balance in ties will prevail in the future. Asked if Indian Prime Minister Narendra could mediate between Moscow and Kyiv, he replied, "I haven't heard about such talk, frankly speaking."

## Thousands of workers return home as Malaysia fully reopens

KUALA LUMPUR: Thousands of Malaysians working in Singapore returned home Friday as Malaysia fully reopened its borders after more than two years of pandemic closure. Many had lined up at the border since late Thursday and crossed over at midnight on foot or by car and motorcycles. National news agency Bernama said fireworks can be heard in the background along with shouts of "welcome back" as families waited for their loved ones at the Johor Causeway linking the countries. The Malaysia-Singapore land border, one of the busiest in the world, was partially reopened Nov. 29 but it was limited to only about 1,500 people one-way daily with strict rules. More than 350,000 people crossed the causeway daily before it was shut, mostly Malaysians working in Singapore. Singapore's Immigration and Checkpoints Authority said in a statement that more than 11,000 travelers passed through the checkpoints early Friday. Malaysian officials estimate some 400,000 people are expected to cross the border within the first week. With most of its population vaccinated, Malaysia has lifted remaining coronavirus restrictions on businesses as it moves to restore pre-pandemic life and revive its economy. Thousands of workers return home as Malaysia fully reopens.

## Putin's gas threat as Ukraine, West dismiss de-escalation claim

KYIV: Russia threatened Thursday to turn off its gas taps to Europe, opening up a new front in its war in Ukraine amid growing scepticism over Moscow s claim it is scaling back its onslaught.Over a month into Russia s invasion of its neighbour, Vladimir Putin s troops have devastated cities like Mariupol with shelling, killing at least 5,000 people in the port city alone. But they have struggled to take any significant territory. Moscow insisted things were going to plan as it said this week it would scale back attacks on capital Kyiv and the northern city of Chernigiv. But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has dismissed the promise as a red herring, and US President Joe Biden said he was "sceptical."

Instead, the US and NATO shared Zelensky s reading that Moscow may be seeking to regroup and resupply for its offensive in the eastern Donbas region. Russia has moved about 20 percent of its troops from around Kyiv after failing to capture the city, which continues to be targeted by Russian airstrikes, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said. He noted that Russia has said it plans to "reprioritize" its operations in the Donbas area.

## Man plays video games while partner in labour, internet divided

A father-to-be brought an entire gaming system to the hospital while his partner was in labour and the video went viral. The TikTok clip was recorded by the partner herself. In the video, the man can be seen wearing his headset and playing a game. "My boyfriend brought his entire gaming system to the hospital during my 21-hour long induction," TikTok user Amber captioned the video. The viral TikTok has garnered more than 1.6 million views, 43,000 likes, and 3,200 comments with the internet divided on whether or not the father was right in doing so. "Wow. Red flag, friend," one user commented. The mother, however, shared that she was "okay" with her partner's action.

## Man hacks airline's website to get back lost luggage

An Indian software engineer hacked an airline's website to find his lost luggage when the airline's customer care service failed to assist him effectively. Nandan Kumar was travelling between Indian cities, Patna and Bangalore on March 27, 2022, when his luggage got exchanged with another passenger's belongings. However, Nandan didn't realise it until his wife unpacked his bags on reaching home. In a thread of tweets, Nandan narrated the incidents from the moment his bag was exchanged. According to Nandan, he first sought the assistance of the customer care services of the airline he travelled with. However, Nandan was unable to connect with the co-passenger despite several attempts. Man hacks airline's website to get back lost luggage.

# Sports & Entertainment

## 2nd ODI: Pakistan complete record run chase to level ODI series with Australia

Pakistan completed their highest successful run chase in one-day internationals when they chased down a mammoth target of 349 to

beat Australia by six wickets in Lahore to level the series at 1-1 on Thursday. Centuries from skipper Babar Azam (114) and opener Imam-ul-Haq (106) allowed the hosts to reach the total on a pitch that aided batting. Imam and Fakhar Zaman (67) gave Pakistan a solid foundation with an opening stand of 118 before Babar walked on and helped Imam build another century partnership as Australia, who used seven bowlers in total, failed to contain the flow of runs. Pakistan still needed to score 70 off the last 10 overs and when they lost Babar in the 45th over, Mohammad Rizwan kept the score ticking over before he was dismissed for 23, leaving worried faces in the crowd as the required run rate crept up. Pakistan completed their highest successful run chase in one-day internationals when they chased down a mammoth target of 349 to beat Australia by six wickets in Lahore to level the series at 1-1 on Thursday. That year, England recorded their worst-ever World Cup finish of fifth before fighting back to take the trophy from Australia in 2009. Australia and England prepare for final date with destiny.

## Elgar, Bavuma give South Africa early Test edge over Bangladesh

DURBAN: Dean Elgar and Temba Bavuma hit half-centuries to give South Africa a slight edge on the first day of the first Test against Bangladesh at Kingsmead on Thursday. South Africa were 233 for four when bad light stopped play after being sent in to bat. South African captain Elgar made 67 in an opening partnership of 113 with fellow left-hander Sarel Erwee (41) but Bangladesh fought back before Bavuma and Kyle Verreynne steadied the innings with an unbeaten fifth wicket partnership of 53. Bavuma, playing in his 50th Test, made 53 not out and Verreynne was unbeaten on 27. It was Bavuma s 18th half-century. He has hit a single century.

## Australia and England prepare for final date with destiny

Australia: The third of April, a date with destiny that both England and Australia have been marching towards in their own way. Now that day is almost here as the two sides prepare to meet in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2022 final. Despite having won 10 of the previous 11 World Cups between them, England and Australia will face off in an ICC Women's Cricket World Cup final for the first time in 34 years. The Hagley Oval in Christchurch will play host to the showpiece event of the 2022 tournament as Australia go in search of a record-extending seventh title, while England look to defend their crown. The two sides started their campaigns together almost a month ago in Hamilton and will end them together, one holding the trophy, the other looking on.

## Shahid Afridi responds to no-confidence motion against PM Imran Khan

With Prime Minister Imran Khan's seemingly on the out, former captain Shahid Afridi appealed that at least one elected government's tenure must be completed. "It has been 74 years since Pakistan's independence. For God's sake let at least one elected government complete its constitutional term," tweeted Afridi. Afridi, voicing support for Prime Minister Imran Khan's government, opined that 74 years of "wrongdoing" will take time to rectify. The sports star's statement comes as the National Assembly is all set to vote on the no-confidence against PM Imran Khan on Sunday. The premier has vowed to play "till the last ball". Shahid Afridi responds to no-confidence motion against PM Imran Khan.

## Alia Bhatt denies rumours of her having issues with 'RRR' team

Alia Bhatt finally broke her silence on the rumours concerning that she is unhappy with the team of her Telugu film RRR. The Gangubai Kathiawadi actor denied the speculations that she deleted some promotional posts for the period drama because she had issues with director SS Rajamouli for her short appearance in the movie. The rumours began after fans of the actor noted that she had archived or deleted some videos and pictures related to the movie. The Bollywood diva took to Instagram to post her side of the story as she asked fans to stop assuming things based on her gram's grid. The 29-year-old wrote, "In today's randomness I've heard that I apparently deleted my RRR posts because I'm upset with the team." Alia Bhatt denies rumours of her having issues with 'RRR' team.

## Priyanka Chopra's mother reflects on being a grandmother: 'It's so joyful'

Madhu Chopra talked about her daughter Priyanka Chopra and her husband Nick Jonas' baby in a latest media interaction. During a live session with ETimes Lifestyle, Madhu was asked about the latest addition in her family. She responded to the question, "I am here and she is in LA. We do Facetime once in a while. I think she is happy and joyous." "This is all I can say for now. But maybe when I go and meet her in the middle of the year, I will be able to answer this better," Madhu added revealing she has not met the baby in person yet.

## Atif Aslam wishes his 'queen' on wedding anniversary with a loving note

Music sensation Atif Aslam has left fans swooning after his adorable anniversary post for his wife Sara Bharwana. The Sang-e-Mah star, turned to his Instagram handle on Thursday evening and shared a belated anniversary post for his wife Sarah. Sharing a gorgeous picture, the Jeena Jeena hitmaker expressed his love and gratitude to his "queen" and wrote, "If I had my life to live over again , next time I would find you sooner so that we could take more pictures and make more memories together." "Thank you for being my Queen Happy Wedding Anniversary," added the Dil Diyan Gallan singer.

## Randhir Kapoor rejects Ranbir Kapoor's claim about early stage dementia

Randhir Kapoor, the veteran actor and Ranbir Kapoor's uncle, has rejected his nephew's statement regarding early stage dementia. Ranbir was recently promoting his late father's (Rishi Kapoor) movie Sharmaji Namkeen, and in this regard, he spoke to NDTV where he revealed that his uncle Randhir is showing early signs of dementia. While giving answer about his health condition in a latest interview to ETimes, Randhir rubbished off 39-year-old's remarks and said that he is perfectly fine. Randhir is the father of two Bollywood divas Karishma and Kareena Kapoor.